



**U.S. Department of Justice
U.S. Attorney's Office
Western District of Texas**

Johnny Sutton, U.S. Attorney

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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April 25, 2008

**ALBANY, NY MAN ARRESTED AND CHARGED BY COMPLAINT
FOR INTERFERING WITH CONTINENTAL AIRLINES FLIGHT CREW**

United States Attorney Johnny Sutton and FBI Special Agent in Charge David Cuthbertson announced the filing of a federal criminal complaint in Midland, Texas, this afternoon charging 44-year-old Arthur David Proskin with interfering with a flight crew by assault or intimidation.

According to the complaint, Proskin was a passenger last night on Continental Airlines flight 2116 traveling from Houston, Texas, to Palm Springs, CA. During the flight, Proskin allegedly became irate and yelled obscenities at a flight attendant, and subsequently at other passengers, after he was struck in the knee by the attendants beverage service cart. Because of Proskin's actions, response from other passengers, fear of an escalating situation that could turn physically violent and for the safety of all passengers on board the flight, the pilots diverted to Midland International Airport and made an unscheduled stop at approximately 8:00pm. Proskin was removed from the plane and eventually placed in federal custody. No one was physically injured during the incident. After Proskin's removal, the plane continued to its original destination.

According to the complaint affidavit, Proskin told authorities he intentionally created such a disturbance on the aircraft because the airline would issue him free travel vouchers when he complained.

Upon conviction, Proskin faces up to 20 years in federal prison and a maximum \$250,000 fine. Proskin, who remains in federal custody, is expected to have his initial appearance on Monday before United States Magistrate Judge L. Stuart Platt in Midland.

This case is being investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation together with the Midland Police Department and is being prosecuted for the government by Assistant United States Attorney John Klassen.

A criminal complaint is a formal accusation of criminal conduct, not evidence of guilt. The defendant is presumed innocent unless and until convicted through due process of law.

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